



New Biden pandemic plan: Closer to normal for the nation

WASHINGTON (AP) — It's time for America to stop letting the coronavirus "dictate how we live," President Joe Biden's White House declared Wednesday, outlining a strategy to allow people to return to many normal activities safely after two years of pandemic disruptions.

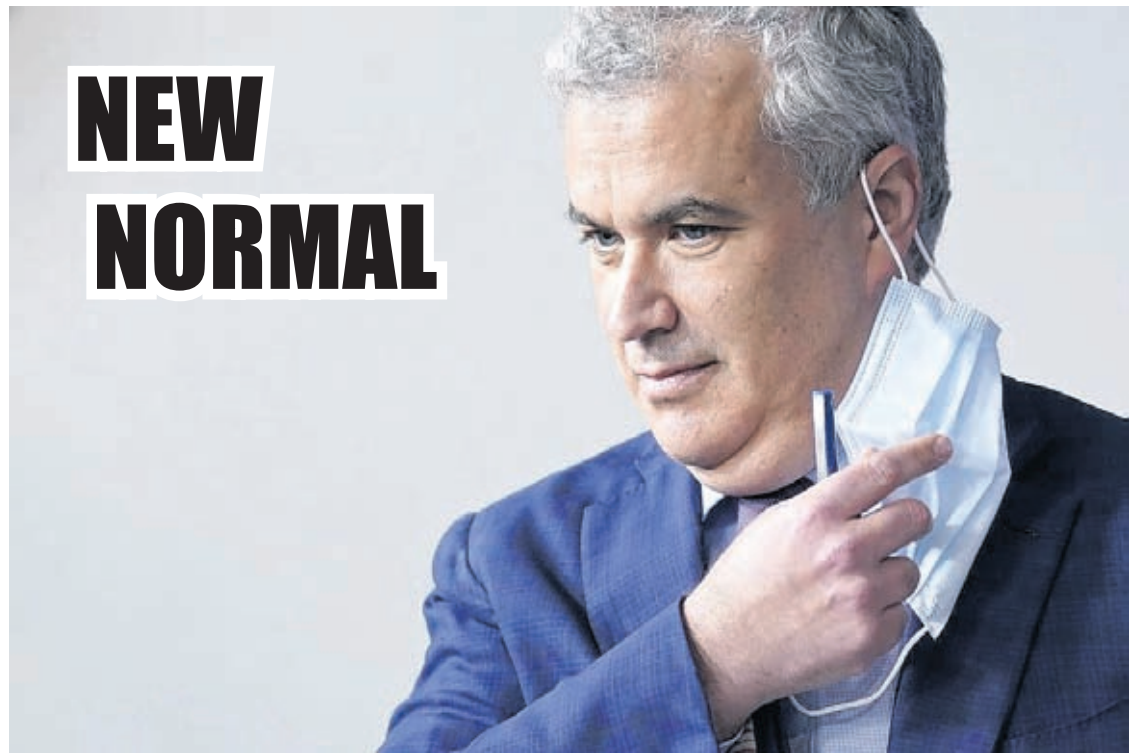
One highlight is a new "test to treat" plan to provide free antiviral pills at pharmacies to people who test positive for the virus. The 90-page National COVID-19 Preparedness Plan spells out initiatives and investments to continue to drive down serious illness and deaths from the virus, while preparing for potential new variants and providing employers and schools the resources to re-

main open.

"We know how to keep our businesses and our schools open with the tools that we have at our disposal," said White House COVID-19 coordinator Jeff Zients. Meanwhile, 140 million Americans, or 43% have now had COVID, according to a new assessment from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That estimate comes from a surveillance program that tested nearly 72,000 blood samples that were sent to commercial labs from late December to late January. The samples were checked for antibodies from infection, and were distinguishable from antibodies that came from vaccination.

Continued on next page

NEW NORMAL



White House COVID-19 Response Coordinator Jeff Zients removes a face mask as he prepares to speak at a press briefing at the White House in Washington, April 13, 2021.

Associated Press

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Students wear face masks and are seated with empty desks separating them from their classmates in a 2nd grade class at School 16 in Yonkers, N.Y., Oct. 20, 2020.

Associated Press

Continued from Front

More than 947,000 people in the U.S. have died from the virus according to the CDC.

Wednesday's White House announcement follows Biden's Tuesday night State of the Union speech, in which he pointed to progress against the pandemic since last year, with a dramatic reduction in cases, along with readily available vaccines and the likelihood of new tests and therapeutics soon becoming more accessible.

"This plan lays out the roadmap to help us fight COVID-19 in the future as we move America from crisis to a time when COVID-19 does not disrupt our daily lives and is something we prevent, protect against, and treat," the White House said. "We are not going to just 'live with COVID.' Because of our work, we are no longer going to let COVID-19 dictate how we live."

That tracked Biden's speech statement, "Tonight, I can say we are moving forward safely, back to more normal routines. It's time for Americans to get back to work and fill our great downtowns again."

COVID-19 cases have fallen to their lowest level since last summer in recent weeks, after a winter spike from the highly transmissible omicron variant. Deaths, though, which lag cases by weeks, are still elevated, with an average of nearly 1,700 people dying in the U.S. each day. Officials emphasize that most instances of serious illnesses and death in the U.S. occur among those who are unvaccinated or who have not received a booster dose of vaccine.

The White House's strategy comes days after the CDC loosened its guidance for when face masks should

be worn in public indoor settings, placing more emphasis on local capacity to treat serious disease than overall case counts. Now more than 70% of the country can safely remove masks indoors, the CDC says, and the percentage is expected to grow as cases continue to decline.

While most states and localities moved to relax their mask requirements even before the CDC change, many have kept mandates in place for schools, and the federal government continues to require face masks on public transportation, including airplanes. The federal mandate is to expire on March 18, and health officials did not provide any indication whether it would be extended.

Meanwhile, businesses across the country are struggling to navigate employees' lingering concerns about COVID-19 and de-

sire for the flexibility of working from home. Many companies' would like to get workers back into offices.

A key component of the administration's plan to convince American that it is safe to resume normal activities is the increasing availability of an antiviral pill from Pfizer that has been shown to reduce the risk of hospitalization from COVID-19 by 90%. By the end of the month, the administration says, 1 million pills will be available, with double that ready for use in April. A White House official said the "test-to-treat" plan would initially roll out in hundreds of pharmacies across the country, including CVS, Walgreens, and Kroger locations, and would soon expand beyond that. Those who test positive at the sites would be able to obtain the antiviral pills for quick use, dramatically reducing the risk of bad outcomes.

One possible problem: The test-to-treat plan drew early concern from some pharmacists. Anne Burns, a vice president with the American Pharmacists Association, said pharmacies across the country have struggled with staffing issues in recent months. Phar-

macists already doling out vaccines, prescriptions and health advice are worried about the extra time needed if they add more COVID-19 testing and treating. "There's just a lot of considerations that go into this," she said. "It takes far longer than it takes to dispense most normal prescriptions." The administration said it also stands ready to rapidly administer millions of vaccine doses for children under 5 once the vaccines are approved by federal regulators. While there had been hope for the first shots to be authorized last month, Pfizer is now waiting on the results of a study including a third dose of the vaccine for that age group, and that will likely delay approval until April.

As part of the new strategy, the administration is calling on Congress to reinstitute tax credits for businesses that provide paid sick leave for employees who are sick with COVID-19. The White House is also asking Congress for additional funding to invest in new COVID-19 drugs, including research into the development of pan-coronavirus vaccines that would prevent against multiple strains and even several different types of viruses.

Meanwhile, federal officials emphasized they have greatly improved the public health system's capacity to identify and track any potential new variants, with new investments in surveillance testing and genomic sequencing. Zients said the administration believes that if needed, it can authorize, produce and deliver new vaccines and treatments "in just 100 days rather than in many months or years." Biden, in his remarks Tuesday night, said that in addition to starting the new antiviral initiative, his administration would allow people in the U.S. to order another round of free tests from the government. He said that starting next week, the administration would make available four more free tests to U.S. households through COVIDTests.gov, which has sent more than 270 million to nearly 70 million households since it launched in mid-January. □



Analysts: Navy bribery trial to expose pervasive problem

By JULIE WATSON

San Diego (AP) — Dozens of U.S. Navy officials have admitted to being bought off by the gregarious, rotund Malaysian defense contractor known as "Fat Leonard" who plied them with prostitutes, Cuban cigars and free stays at the Philippines' Shangri-La hotel, among other things.

Now as the last five of 34 defendants stand trial in federal court in San Diego, what's more shocking is how little the case has changed the Navy's way of doing business, according to former military officers and government watchdog advocates.

"You would expect that one of the largest corruption scandals in the history of the United States Navy would provoke pretty dramatic changes to prevent something like this from happening again in the future. But sadly, that's not really the case," said Dan Grazier, a former Marine who now works as a military analyst at the Project on Government Oversight in Washington.

The case has centered around Leonard Glenn Francis who admitted in 2015 to offering \$500,000 in bribes to Navy officers.



Assistant U.S. Attorneys Mark Pletcher, left, and Robert Huie, talk outside the federal courthouse, about the guilty plea of Leonard Francis, known in military circles as Fat Leonard, on bribery charges involving U.S. Navy officials Thursday, Jan. 15, 2015, in San Diego.

Associated Press

In exchange, the officers passed him classified information and even went so far as redirecting military vessels to ports that were lucrative for his Singapore-based ship servicing company, Glenn Defense Marine Asia, or GDMA.

Twenty-nine people, mostly Navy officials, have pleaded guilty to helping Francis including providing classified ship schedules in exchange for extravagant outings in South Asia with prostitutes and meals with

tabs totaling more than \$20,000.

"While scores of Navy officials were partying with Leonard Francis, a massive breach of national security was in full swing," U.S. Attorney Randy Grossman said recently.

Prosecutors say Francis and his company overcharged the U.S. military by more than \$35 million for its services between 2004 and 2013, which included providing food and water to the ships at Pacific ports in

Asia.

Francis, who is scheduled to be sentenced in July, has been cooperating with the U.S. Department of Justice since his arrest in 2013 in San Diego.

Five officers — Rear Adm. Bruce Loveless, Capt. David Newland, James Dolan and David Lausman, and Cmdr. Mario Herrera — have maintained their innocence and have gone to trial.

It's unclear whether Francis, who is in poor health and

has been under house arrest, will testify at the trial, which is expected to last months. Defense lawyers have been trying to prevent him from taking the stand after he gave his version of events in a podcast last year.

Navy officials vowed to clean up their contracting processes in response to the scandal and implemented more oversight. Sailors received more ethics training. Supply officers have less independence. Goods and services now must be priced at current market rates as determined by the Navy's Fleet Logistics Centers.

But that's not enough for Grazier, who said the military needs to move away from contracting out so much of its work. As bases have closed worldwide, the Navy has increasingly turned to contractors to do what it once did in-house.

"I think unless the Navy really changes the way it does business, future Fat Leonards are just going to be more cautious, but it's not going to change their practices," Grazier said. Grazier fears the case's biggest impact has been on young people like his son who is an enlisted sailor. □

Boebert outburst on Afghanistan jolts State of the Union

By FARNOUSH AMIRI

WASHINGTON (AP) — As President Joe Biden was coming to the end of his State of the Union address Tuesday night, a somber moment about his son's death turned into a stunning outburst by one of the Republicans' most outspoken members.

Delivering the loudest heckling of Biden during the speech, Rep. Lauren Boebert of Colorado blamed Biden for the 13 service members who were killed during the U.S. withdrawal in Afghanistan.

It was just the latest breach of decorum for a presidential address, an annual event where unruly behavior by lawmakers has become almost expected. Republican Rep. Joe Wil-

son shouted "you lie!" at President Barack Obama during a joint speech to Congress in 2009. Eleven years later, Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi ripped up a copy of President Donald Trump's speech while standing behind him.

Boebert's moment came as Biden began to discuss how his son, who died of cancer, was among the many veterans who may have suffered from toxic exposure injuries from military burn pits, used extensively in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"A cancer that put them in a flag-draped coffin" Biden started to say when Boebert yelled, "You put them in. Thirteen of them!"

The comment drew an outpouring of boos from Dem-

ocrats, adding a note of division to an address that received several moments of robust bipartisan applause. Democrats and Republicans from both chambers stood up and clapped as the president discussed the strength and resolute of the Ukrainian people in the face of Russian aggression. Members stood together as Biden called for an end to the opioid epidemic and when he declared that "defund the police" is not the answer to the crisis between law enforcement and the communities they serve. But it was when the mention of veterans and providing support for victims of burn pits, a normally bipartisan topic, that Boebert stood to make her case about what many



Rep. Lauren Boebert, R-Colo., left, and Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., right, scream "Build the Wall" as President Joe Biden delivers his first State of the Union address to a joint session of Congress at the Capitol, Tuesday, March 1, 2022, in Washington.

Associated Press

in the GOP see as Biden's failed withdrawal of U.S. troops in Afghanistan last summer. "I couldn't stay si-

lent," Boebert tweeted after the speech. "Our heroic servicemen and women deserve so much better." □

Dylann Roof takes church shooting appeal to US Supreme Court

By MEG KINNARD

Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) —

Attorneys for convicted Charleston church shooter Dylann Roof have asked the U.S. Supreme Court to decide how to handle disagreements over mental illness-related evidence between capital defendants and their attorneys, an issue that has played a role throughout his case over the 2015 racist slayings of nine members of a Black South Carolina congregation.

When a capital defendant who has been ruled competent to stand trial and his attorneys "disagree on whether to present mitigating evidence depicting him as mentally ill, who gets the final say?" Roof's appellate team wrote in their petition, filed late last month with the high court.

Justices' consideration is "needed to resolve a deep divide among the lower courts over who — client or lawyer — gets to decide whether mitigation evidence will be introduced at a capital penalty hearing."

Roof's self-representation and desire to block any evidence potentially portraying him as mentally ill — even if it could have helped him avoid the death penalty — has been a constant part of his case. During the sentencing phase of his death penalty trial, Roof fired his legal



In this June 18, 2015, file photo, Charleston, S.C., shooting suspect Dylann Storm Roof is escorted from the Cleveland County Courthouse in Shelby, N.C.

Associated Press

team and opted to represent himself. This move, his appellate attorneys have written, successfully prevented jurors from hearing evidence about his mental health, "under the delusion" that "he would be rescued from prison by white-nationalists — but only, bizarrely, if he kept his mental impairments out of the public record."

Roof made his decision, his team argued in the petition, "after the district court told him that counsel could

introduce evidence depicting him as mentally ill over his objection."

But there is a disconnect, his attorneys argued, between how such cases have been handled in the 4th Circuit versus other jurisdictions, where "the vast majority of state and federal courts hold otherwise, leaving this deeply personal choice to a defendant." In other words, they argued, "Had Roof been tried in any one of those majority jurisdictions, he would not

have been forced to self-represent at his capital trial to block his own attorneys from presenting evidence he abhorred."

Authorities have said Roof opened fire during the closing prayer of a Bible study at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, raining down dozens of bullets on those assembled. He was 21 at the time.

Last year, a panel of appellate judges unanimously upheld Roof's conviction

and death sentence and issued a scathing rebuke of Roof's crimes, which the judges wrote "qualify him for the harshest penalty that a just society can impose."

All of the judges from the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which covers South Carolina, recused themselves from hearing Roof's case. One of the judges, Jay Richardson, prosecuted Roof's case as an assistant U.S. attorney in 2017, when Roof became the first person in the U.S. sentenced to death for a federal hate crime.

Roof subsequently asked the court to reconsider its recusal. The court denied that request, as well as one for a new hearing.

According to court documents filed in another federal case, the FBI heard two neo-Nazi group members talk about trying to free Roof from the maximum-security prison in Terre Haute, Indiana, where he is an inmate, including details on the number of guards present and how a shootout would happen.

If unsuccessful in his direct appeal, Roof could file what's known as a 2255 appeal, a request that the trial court review the constitutionality of his conviction and sentence. He could also seek a presidential pardon.

The government's response to Roof's request is due by the end of the month. □

Los Angeles names its first female fire department chief



Kristin Crowley speaks to the press after Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti and City Council President Nury Martinez nominated Crowley for chief of the Los Angeles Fire Department on Tuesday, Jan. 18, 2022.

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The Los Angeles City Council on Tuesday unanimously confirmed the appointment of Deputy Chief Kristin Crowley to be the first woman to lead the LA Fire Department. Crowley will replace Ralph Terrazas, who became the department's first Latino chief in 2014 and promoted Crowley several times.

Mayor Eric Garcetti nominated Crowley for the top spot in January.

Crowley, who currently holds the jobs of acting administrative operations chief deputy and fire marshal, said at the time of her nomination that keeping the department operationally ready would be her number one priority.

Her appointment comes as the fire department deals with issues ranging from

the COVID-19 pandemic to claims that its female employees face bullying and harassment.

Harassing behavior will not be tolerated, Crowley said in January. She was a firefighter, paramedic, engineer and battalion chief in the steps of her career leading up her joining the department's command staff.

Terrazas plans to retire March 26, ending a 38-year career that included the department responding to the coronavirus pandemic by running city sites that have administered millions of COVID-19 tests and vaccinations.

The department has about 3,400 uniformed personnel and 106 fire stations serving about 4 million people across 469 square miles (1,215 square kilometers). □

U.N. Assembly votes to demand that Russia stop war in Ukraine

By EDITH M. LEDERER and JENNIFER PELTZ

UNITED NATIONS (AP) —

The U.N. General Assembly voted at an emergency special session Wednesday to demand an immediate halt to Moscow's offensive against Ukraine and withdrawal of all Russian troops, with very strong support from the world organization's 193 member nations that sparked sustained applause.

The vote on the resolution, entitled "Aggression against Ukraine," was 141-5 with 35 abstentions.

Russia got support for its appeal to vote against the resolution only from Belarus, Syria, North Korea and Eritrea, a powerful indication of the international isolation that Russian President Vladimir Putin faces for invading his country's smaller neighbor. Emphasizing that isolation was a major goal of the resolution's supporters.

The abstentions included China and India, as expected, but also some surprises from usual Russian allies Cuba and Nicaragua. And the United Arab Emirates, which abstained on last Friday's similar Security Council resolution, voted "yes."

Speaking to the General Assembly on Tuesday, Cuban Ambassador Pedro Luis Cuesta blamed the crisis on what he said is the U.S. determination to keep expanding NATO toward Russia's borders as well as the delivery of modern weapons to Ukraine, ignoring Russia's concerns for its own security. He said the resolution "suffers from lack of balance" and doesn't begin to address the concerns of both parties, or "the responsibility of those who took aggressive actions which precipitated the escalation of this conflict."

Unlike Security Council resolutions, General Assembly resolutions are not legally binding, but they do have clout in reflecting international opinion. Under special emergency session rules, a resolution needs approval of two-thirds of



United Nations members vote on a resolution concerning the Ukraine during an emergency meeting of the General Assembly at United Nations headquarters, Wednesday, March 2, 2022.

Associated Press

those countries voting, and abstentions don't count.

After Russia vetoed a similar resolution in the Security Council on Feb. 25, Ukraine and its supporters won approval for an emergency special session -- the first since 1997 -- to try to spotlight opposition to Russia's invasion.

The resolution states that Russia's military operations in Ukraine "are on a scale that the international community has not seen in Europe in decades and that urgent action is needed to save this generation from the scourge of war." It "urges the immediate peaceful resolution of the conflict" and reaffirms the assembly's commitment "to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders."

Before the vote, Ukraine's U.N. Ambassador Sergiy Kyslytsya said of Russian forces: "They have come to the Ukrainian soil, not only to kill some of us ... they have come to deprive Ukraine of the very right to exist," adding that "the crimes are so barbaric that it is difficult to comprehend."

Russia's U.N. Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia then

urged U.N. members to vote against the resolution, alleging that Western nations exerted "unprecedented pressure" with "open and cynical threats" to get support for the measure.

"This document will not allow us to end military activities. On the contrary, it could embolden Kyiv radicals and nationalists to continue to determine the policy of their country at any price," Nebenzia warned.

"Your refusal to support today's draft resolution is a vote for a peaceful Ukraine" that would not "be managed from the outside," he said. "This was the aim of our special military operation, which the sponsors of this resolution tried to present as aggression."

The resolution also deplores "the involvement of Belarus in this unlawful use of force against Ukraine," a characterization that Belarusian Ambassador Valentin Rybakov flatly rejected in his speech to the assembly shortly before the vote.

He said his country's only involvement in the conflict was organizing talks, due to continue Thursday, between Russia and Ukraine. Belarus has taken Russia's

side in the conflict, with Rybakov saying the resolution reflected a "double standards" toward Russia and the West.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told reporters immediately after the vote: "The message of the General Assembly is loud and clear: End hostilities in Ukraine — now. Silence the guns — now. Open the door to dialogue and diplomacy — now."

"We don't have a moment to lose," he said. "The brutal effects of the conflict are plain to see ... It threatens to get much, much worse."

U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield followed, saying "the world has spoken with a clear, united voice" and the vote "demonstrated that Russia is isolated and alone, and that the costs will keep rising until Russia relents."

She urged all countries to "keep the momentum going," do everything possible to help the Ukrainian people, hold Russia accountable and "match our strong words with strong actions."

In his explanation of China's abstention, Ambassador Zhang Jun used more emotional language than at previous U.N. meetings, citing "dramatic changes

of the situation in Ukraine" and calling what is unfolding "heart-wrenching." He reiterated Beijing's support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries, and for the peaceful settlements of all disputes in line with the U.N. Charter. "The top priority right now is to ease the situation on the ground as much as possible, and prevent the situation from escalating or even getting out of control," Zhang said.

The assembly resolution, co-sponsored by 96 countries, deplored Russia's "aggression" against Ukraine "in the strongest terms" and demanded an immediate halt to Moscow's use of force and the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of all Russian forces from Ukraine's internationally recognized borders.

The measure also called on Russia to reverse a decision to recognize two separatist parts of eastern Ukraine as independent.

During more than two days of meetings preceding the vote, there were speeches from about 120 countries. From the tiny Pacific island nation of Palau to Europe's economic powerhouse Germany, country after country lashed out at Russia's invasion of Ukraine and urged support for the U.N. resolution during their speeches. There were only a few that supported Russia and some that took no position such as Suriname and South Africa, which urged compromise and diplomacy to find a lasting resolution to the crisis. In Wednesday's vote, Suriname voted "yes" and South Africa abstained.

The resolution's co-sponsors included Afghanistan, where the Taliban ousted the elected government last August, and Myanmar, where the military overthrew the elected government led by Aung San Suu Kyi on Feb. 1, 2021. But neither the Taliban nor Myanmar's military government have gained U.N. recognition so that support came from representatives of their previous governments. □

Libyan lawmakers approve new govt, fueling tensions

By RAMI MUSA and SAMY MAGDY

Associated Press

BENGHAZI, Libya (AP) —

Libyan lawmakers confirmed a new transitional government Tuesday, a move that is likely to lead to parallel administrations and fuel mounting tensions in a country that has been mired in conflict for the past decade.

Prime Minister-designate Fathi Bashagha submitted his Cabinet to the east-based House of Representatives, where 92 of 101 lawmakers in attendance approved it in a vote broadcast live from the city of Tobruk.

The new government includes three deputy prime ministers, 29 ministers and six ministers of state. There are only two women in the Cabinet, overseeing the Ministry of Culture and Arts and holding the position of State Minister for Women Affairs.

Bashagha appointed Ahmed Houma, the second deputy speaker of the parliament, to lead the Ministry of Defense, and Brig. Essam Abu Zreiba, from the western city of Zawiya, as interior minister. Former ambassador to the European



Fathi Bashagha holds a news conference after east-based lawmakers named Bashagha to replace then Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah as head of a new interim government, in Tripoli, Libya, Feb. 10, 2022.

Associated Press

Union, Hafez Qadour, was named foreign minister.

The appointment of Bashagha last month, a powerful former interior minister from the western city of Misrata, is part of a roadmap that also involves constitutional amendments and sets the date for elections within 14 months.

The move deepened divisions among Libyan factions and raised fears that

fighting could return after more than a year and a half of relative calm.

U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said the United Nations is closely watching the developments, saying "the ongoing political legislative process" must be transparent "and adhere to established rules and agreements." He also stressed the importance of maintaining the "calm and stability" that

has been achieved since the October 2020 cease-fire agreement.

Bashagha has formed an alliance with powerful east-based commander Khalifa Hifter, who welcomed Bashagha's appointment as prime minister earlier this month. That alliance has caused concerns among anti-Hifter factions in western Libya and their main foreign backer, Turkey.

"Now the question is whether this contrived alliance will be enough for Bashagha and his ministers to impose themselves in Tripoli and rule," said Jalel Harchaoui, a researcher specializing in Libya. "It is not clear at all that Turkey and, importantly, Misrata's main forces will let that happen right away."

Embattled Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah, who like Bashagha hails from Misrata, remined defiant Tuesday against replacing his government. In a statement, Dbeibah's government called Tuesday's confirmation a "new farce" and accused the parliament's leadership of "messing with the security and stability of Libyans."

Dbeibah has repeatedly said his government will hand over power only to an elected government. He has proposed a four-point plan to hold a simultaneous parliamentary vote and referendum on constitutional amendments late in June. That would be followed by a presidential election after the new parliament crafts a permanent constitution. He did not offer a time frame for the presidential election. □

Nearly 500 migrants push into Spanish North African enclave



Migrants arrive at a holding centre after crossing the fences separating the Spanish enclave of Melilla from Morocco, in Melilla, Spain, Wednesday, March 2, 2022.

Associated Press

By ARITZ PARRA

MADRID (AP) — A record number of 491 migrants crossed the fences separating the Spanish enclave of Melilla from Morocco Wednesday, authorities

in the North African city said. Dozens were injured, including border patrol agents.

The Spanish government representative in Melilla, Sabrina Moh, told local ra-

dio station Cadena COPE she was surprised over 2,000 people had attempted the crossing, one of the highest numbers on record.

Everything happened "really fast," Moh said.

People fleeing poverty or violence wait for weeks or even months in the vicinity of Melilla and Ceuta, another Spanish territory on the North Africa coast, waiting for the best opportunity to surprise police agents on both sides of the border. If they succeed, they try to continue on to the Spanish mainland and other parts of continental Europe.

COPE posted videos online showing jubilant men celebrating, some of them covered in blood, as their made their way to a migrant center in Melilla with

the capacity to host 480 people.

The local Spanish government office issued a statement saying that Moroccan border guards had been overwhelmed by "the great violence" when at least 2,500 people tried to break in to Melilla at 9.30 a.m.

It said people in the group carried hooks and sticks and threw stones at the guards. They also had screws attached to their shoes, which migrants often use to climb the 6-meter (20-foot) double fence that encircles the city of 85,000.

Security forces "neutralized a great part of the numerous group of the people who have tried to enter our city," the statement said, adding that 491 had en-

tered.

It was the greatest number of entries in one attempt on the city's records, the Spanish government's delegation in Melilla said.

It said 36 people, including 20 migrants and 16 Spanish Civil Guard officers were treated for minor injuries.

Thousands, including hundreds of unaccompanied children, crossed into Ceuta last year as Moroccan authorities dropped their vigilance of the shared border. The reduced border security took place amid a diplomatic row between Spain and Morocco over the future of Western Sahara, a territory annexed by Rabat in the 1970s.

Moroccan border guards tried to stop people from crossing over to Melilla on Wednesday, Moh said. □

Venezuelan opposition faces fading enthusiasm

By REGINA GARCIA CANO

Associated Press

MAIQUETIA, Venezuela

(AP) — Emily Mayora's family once supported the opposition to Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, especially when a fresh young leader injected life into that movement three years ago and drew huge crowds into the street.

But when the same leader showed up recently to rally support in Maiquetia, a town on the Caribbean Sea, Mayora didn't bother to walk a block to see him. She stayed in the little store she runs from her home, selling soda and snacks while Juan Guaidó, made a speech to about 90 people.

Her disappointment is widely shared in Venezuela, where the economy is dismal and many people are fed up both with the government and the groups that oppose it.

"I don't believe in either side, neither the opponents nor the ruling party," the mother of two said. "Why? Because they promise and promise and do not deliver. They get up there, 'We're going to get rid this nefarious government,' just talk. There are many people here who do not leave their homes (to attend the gathering) only a few do because they no longer believe in any of this."

That broad malaise fol-



Venezuela opposition leader Juan Guaidó speaks to residents to present his unity plan to Venezuelans, in Maiquetia, Venezuela, Saturday, Feb. 19, 2022.

Associated Press

lows a brief burst of enthusiasm generated by a few notable local election victories and it undercuts opposition efforts to reconnect with supporters after a pandemic-forced hiatus of large marches and gatherings.

Guaidó, then the head of congress, declared himself Venezuela's legitimate leader in 2019, asserting Maduro's reelection had been illegitimate.

He drew enormous crowds of backers into the streets while also winning widespread international recognition from the U.S., Canada and many European

nations.

But much of the momentum seems to have evaporated.

Guaidó's popularity has dropped from about 60% three years ago to under 15% in February, according to the the Venezuela-based polling firm Data-nalisis.

That's because many believe he lacks a viable way to oust Maduro, who has held power since 2013, said David Smilde, senior fellow at the Washington Office on Latin America and professor at Tulane University.

"Unless it's somebody who's just really enamored

with Guaidó or somehow close to the opposition movement, it's pretty hard to find people that think that this is the guy," Smilde said.

"Most everyone else thinks, 'Well, this just led to nothing; nothing's changed.' And they're going to remain passive until they see some kind of really different new offering."

Government crackdowns, too, have made many wary of getting involved.

Domestically, some key opposition leaders and some vocal citizens have been imprisoned or fled abroad. The government

has squeezed out opposition and most independent news outlets. Many fear that expressing opposition could endanger their access to subsidized goods distributed by the government.

Internationally, Guaidó's failure to capitalize on his initial burst of popularity has dimmed his appeal. Several of the countries that once recognized Guaidó's parallel government no longer do so.

A much smaller crowd turned up on a narrow, dead-end street in a hillside neighborhood last month to hear Guaidó, still just 38. Some had been bused in and wore the orange or blue t-shirts of political parties in his U.S.-backed movement. Others stood outside their homes to listen and a few walked over to shake his hand.

But for many, daily routine continued. A man delivered water to homes, another left for work. Mayora, 44, kept her shop open. A customer struggled to do math trying to figure out how best to stretch \$5.

"People right now have become very selective, if you will, about the things they attend to and the things they put energy and effort into," said Benigno Alarcón, director of the Center for Political and Government Studies at the Andres Bello Catholic University. □

South African court rules new Zulu king can be crowned

By GERALD IMRAY

Associated Press

CAPE TOWN, South Africa

(AP) — A new Zulu king

can be crowned in South Africa after a court settled a dispute Wednesday over whether the prince named as heir to the throne last year had a rightful claim to it. A KwaZulu-Natal high court judge in the city of Pietermaritzburg ruled that Prince Misuzulu KaZwelithini, the eldest surviving son of the late king, is the "undisputed successor to the throne."

The Zulu king has a largely ceremonial role in South

Africa but holds great significance for the 12 million Zulus who make up the country's largest ethnic group. The king also inherits control over large portions of land and a significant fortune.

The battle over Prince Misuzulu's claim began last year with the death of King Goodwill Zwelithini, who had held the throne since 1968. The king's will named one of his wives as Queen Regent of the Zulus, but she died a month after the king, leaving her son Prince Misuzulu to be named the king in waiting. Two Zulu

princesses said the late king's will had been forged and went to court to stop Misuzulu's coronation.

The judge ruled Misuzulu was the rightful heir, giving the go-ahead for South Africa to witness the first Zulu coronation in more than half a century and the first in the country's post-apartheid era.

However, the judge suspended the execution of the late king's will pending a court hearing to decide on its authenticity. King Zwelithini's fortune has been estimated at \$20 million. □



Prince Misuzulu KaZwelithini, center, flanked by fellow warriors in traditional dress at the KwaKhangalamankengane Royal Palace, during a ceremony, in Nongoma, Friday May 7, 2021.

Associated Press

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Oranjestad - Last Saturday the Minister of Culture Xiomara Maduro accompanied by Minister of Tourism Dangui Oduber started the National Light Parade after a wonderful show presented by local acrobatics group RCC, by lighting the

torch that would indicate the beginning of the parade.

The parade started with a beautiful runway of our queens, Princes and our Cultural Ladies that were escorted by Roland Helder

Aruba celebrated a stunning National Light Parade full of laughter, unity and exemplary behavior

from Aruba's Department of Culture. The Parade featured the participation of 6 groups with performances from 6 bands and 2 brass-bands. During the parade one could admire the various participants with gorgeous bodypieces and headpieces, along with Mrs. Riri Botta and her group with a stunning roadpiece celebrating restaurant El Gaucho's 45th anniversary during the parade. Everyone present at the parade could see and experience the joy, unity and creativity of Aruba's citizens at the parade.

Minister Maduro thanked the president of Comision Celebracion Dianan Nacional, CCDN, Sr. John John Flemming, spokesperson for the parade Sr. Lyonel Driksz, and every volunteer along with the team that assisted the minister to prepare, coordinate and guide the parade in a successful manner. She



also expressed gratitude to Police, Ambulance, Red Cross, Department of Public Works and Serlimar for their valuable contribution to this parade. To all press from Aruba and Curacao, the minister wants to extend her gratitude for providing information about the Parade and covering the beautiful cultural event of Aruba.

A heartfelt gratitude was expressed to all participants for their participa-

tion and support to the National Light Parade with a "thank you for accepting the invitation and forming part of a positive event." To all the visitors who came and celebrated along with us, thank you for your presence, your support and your exemplary behavior.

When you do something with good intentions in your heart for the wellbeing of Aruba, you will always succeed. Congratulations Aruba! □



Teaching children about agriculture at school is essential

Oranjestad - It is important and necessary to teach our children from a relatively young age about the value and importance of planting and agriculture.

This is a lesson that will follow them into adulthood, and ensure that no matter what may happens they will always be able to provide food on the table to eat. Students



of local school Hilario Ángela are contributing to our agriculture by providing lessons on planting and agriculture to the lovely students of the school with the help of their teachers.

The department of Agriculture, Livestock and Fishery, bet-

ter known as Santa Rosa, is very pleased with the initiative, and proud that local schools are starting to dedicate time and effort into topics of planting to our children in order to educate them and broaden their knowledge about all the different trees they can plant at home. □



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Over a decade in business, Aruba Living Today: Offering the so much needed human touch



NOORD — We are in 2022. It's been a wild ride with Covid-19 and we all are aiming for a change of routine. We simply want to "live" life again. "It is time for living your dream," as the quote says at Aruba Living Today's office. "We are ten plus years in business, and I am proud to say that all our clients stuck with us. We are no part of a big company, we keep it small, personal, and real. Because you are not a number, no sales target either and certainly your name is not commission. Our responsibility is to make your dream come true," says owner Randolph Arends.

Tempting times

Do you remember the feeling as a kid, when you went to the store with your mom and the baker gave you a sweet roll, the butcher a slice of ham and they all took time to talk to each other? That time when doing groceries on a Saturday meant fun, making friends, and creating connections. To be fully aware in the moment and enjoying the time together sounds like a controversy today. Everything is efficient, there's no-time-to-waste and while doing one task the mind is already thinking ahead to what is next on your to-do list. Did Covid-19 teach us anything? Weren't we telling each other during the lockdown that we would pay more

attention to each other? Wasn't the message that health and happiness is so much more valuable than hitting targets and implement to-do tasks? The pandemic prevents us from connecting physically. Tight hugs and shaking hands firmly are no longer a natural thing. We live in a world of face masks hides smiles, and hands are sanitized after each touch. This is not who we are. We are in search for connection.

From human to human

If you have decided to buy a house or rent one for vacation in Aruba and you are looking for that match, the question now is how to click with a person that offers a personal touch? One who pays genuine attention and has sincere interest in what you want? This different approach to real estate is what sets Aruba Living Today apart, and the reason Randolph calls himself a property mediator instead of a real estate broker. "The personal touch is essential to me. I am stepping aside of the image that real estate brokers are only in for the commission. This image does not fit me at all, I am in for my passion, and I can only do this from the heart."

One stop shopping point

Services offered by Aruba Living Today are House and Land Sales, Rentals, Investments, Property Management, Vacation Rental, Mortgages, Insurances, Maintenance, Assist in Arrangements for Notary and Utilities, Guiding Bureaucracy Process and Assisting in Import of Furniture. Randolph and his business partner Berend Prenger are a fantastic, experienced duo, each of them specialists in the field. Berend is also a certified appraiser within the Dutch Kingdom meaning he does your appraisal report that is accepted by all banks and he delivers within three days. "This definitely speeds up the process of buying," Prenger adds.



You are welcome to meet in person

Aruba Living Today houses in an authentic Aruban house, welcoming you in a warm ambiance that emphasizes the philosophy of connecting. Candles, Buddha ornaments and a homey setting form the décor for you to sit and talk about your dream house or investment. "My goal was to do real estate in a different way when I established this company June 1st 2009. Not from the perspective of only selling, but to look for the perfect match between dream house and client. My philosophy is: it will only work when all involved are happy and connected by that personal touch."

Aruba Living Today caters for both local and foreign market divided into 40 % local buyers and 60 % foreign buyers. "Our customers come from Holland, Belgium, Norway, Germany, UK, Russia, Latin America, United States and Canada. We are widely covered and thus provable good with different cultures, also we speak four languages." Besides that, Aruba Living Today is open to every budget, they have listings for all category buyers. As a member of the Aruban Real Estate Association, they are listed also on the website www.arubalisting.com within a group of 20 of the most advanced realtors on the island. Aruba Living Today is featured on House Hunters, social media, Aruba Living Today and of course in Aruba Today's newspaper. □



Aruba Living Today

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Mail randolph@livingtoday.aw

ATSA, The Aruba Timeshare Association, conducts a general meeting



Eagle Beach - ATSA, The Aruba Timeshare Association, held a general meeting just recently at La Cabana Beach Resort & Casino.

The meeting was attended by members of the association, also present Dangui Oduber, the Minister of Tourism and Public Health, Ursell M. Arends, the Minister of Integrity, Nature, Transport and Elderly Care and Endy Croes, the Minister of Education and Sport.

The ministers came to the meeting to update ATSA members on a series of important issues. The Minister of Tourism and Public Health talked about the island's pandemic exit-strategy, the Minister of Integrity, Nature, Transport and Elderly Care, wearing the environment hat, re-



ported updates regarding RWZI, the gray water rehabilitation facility in Bubali, and the Minister of Education and Sport, discussed collaboration between the resorts and Scol Practico pa Ofishi, SPO.

In his address, the Minister of Tourism and Public Health announced an increase in the ICU capacity on



island, the revision of entry protocols, the strategy for the local community, the flexibility introduced with the acceptance of Anti Gene tests, the reinforcement of the local health-department and the promotion of vaccines. As for the Tourism Policy, the Minister described six focal areas for the Aruba Tourism Product Enhancement Fund, TPEF, namely Attractions, Safety, Environment, Heritage, Awareness and Investments.

Among the projects introduced in 2022, Eagle Beach Beautification and Enhancement; dredging the Oranjestad Harbor to replenish Aruba's white sand deposits; the Malmok Boardwalk Phase 3; the Hooiberg Stairs' Maintenance and Beautifications; the Fort Zoutman Restoration; Sustainable Waste Management via the TPEF cleaner teams and TPEF garbage bins, also funds allocated to Stimami Sterilisami, the co-sponsoring stray cat & dog, spay and neuter program. The Minister of Education and Sport then discussed the efforts made at SPO to integrate students in the workplace, by providing guidance to companies, not just students. SPO he explained, promotes inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all, improving living standards.

SPO, he said provides equitable education to students with limited

learning abilities, IQs between 60 to 80, who can learn important life skills, providing they understand instructions clearly. If given sufficient guidance they are motivated, the minister stated, to deliver quality and loyalty to their employer. The school has students between the ages of 12 and 18, and when they graduate they are ready to integrate in the work force, after three years of practical training.

The Minister of Integrity, Nature, Transport and Elderly Care, gave a status update regarding RWZI, the gray water rehab facility in Bubali, sharing that since it is not part of the Landspakket, the reforms suggested by the Dutch, Aruba doesn't have the funding available, however ATA provided the finances for 2022 and a business case is being researched at this moment, testing the possibility for a Build-Own-Operate, option.

The Minister pledged his dedication to the project, supporting the investment to increase RWZI's capacity, introduce environmental laws governing waste policy and create a united Western Wetland protected area, managed by Fundacion Parke National Arikok, FPNA.

ATSA also used the occasion to review its Year Ending, 2021 finances, by Treasurer Jurgen Schalijs along with a short update on the Security Foundation by Board Member, hotelier Bob Curtis, and the University of Aruba research project, March 14th to 25th, 2022.

An amicable farewell ceremony for retiring hotelier, former ATSA President, Andy Osborne, concluded the agenda, put together by President Luigi Heredia and Board Member Sulaika Kelly. □



Millennial Money: Viral savings challenges that pay off

By **MELISSA LAMBARENA** of **NerdWallet**

Among the different ways to trick yourself into saving, money-saving challenges are some of the most engaging.

They can help you feel connected to finances by requiring frequent check-ins and debunking feelings of inadequacy when it comes to saving. For Cristina Brown, a self-described savings-challenge designer and founder of the blog Happy Savings Co, money-saving challenges helped her go from spending to saving.

"I recognized the need to save money, and I thought that this would be a good way to kind of gamify it," Brown says.

If saving for tomorrow seems out of reach, the right money challenge can generate excitement, push competitive buttons and potentially increase savings.

VIRAL CHALLENGES THAT CAN ADD UP

Before starting a savings challenge, review your budget to trim unnecessary expenses. The amount of breathing room in your budget will determine the level of difficulty that's possible for a challenge.

Assigning a goal to a challenge may also keep you motivated and consistent, whether it be saving for an emergency fund, a vacation or something else.

A few popular challenges to consider include:

— **Keep the change challenges:** Beginner-friendly \$1 and \$5 savings challenges allow for passive saving, which takes less effort and adopts an out-of-sight ap-



In this Wednesday, April 3, 2019, file photo, a tip box is filled with dollar bills, in New York.

Associated Press

proach. For a designated amount of time, both challenges involve putting aside denominations of these bills that are left over from cash transactions.

Ezekiel Waisel, a certified financial planner at SHP Financial, a financial planning firm, tried the \$5 challenge in 2016 and saved about \$300 in a year for a round-trip flight. "I don't use a lot of cash, so the fact that I even saved that much was pretty surprising to me," he says.

— **The 52-week challenge:** This challenge hikes up the savings by \$1 weekly and requires you to actively save by budgeting for each week. In the first week you save \$1, in the second week \$2, and so on until the 52nd week. The challenge can also be reversed to start saving \$52 in the first week and work downward, as is Brown's preference in 2022. Either way, the chal-

lenge can save \$1,378 in a year, enough to cover an emergency or a large purchase.

"At the end of the year with holidays — even with all of our best efforts of setting up sinking funds for the holidays and stuff like that — things can still get pretty tight, so I reversed the order to save the bigger amounts at the beginning of the year," says Brown. A sinking fund holds money that's earmarked for a specific goal or expense.

— **The 100 envelope challenge:** This potentially lucrative and difficult money-saving challenge requires numbering 100 envelopes from one to 100, shuffling them and drawing one randomly every day. The number on the envelope drawn determines the amount of cash that must be saved. Drawing high numbers consecutively can prove difficult, so this challenge

is ideal for those with more cash flow. If completed, it saves up to \$5,050, but don't hold money in envelopes too long. Keep it safe by designating a day every other week or monthly to deposit savings into a high-interest bank account.

— **The weather Wednesday challenge:** For thrill-seekers with enough cash flow, this challenge can offer big savings with less predictability. On every Wednesday, for a year, save cash or make a deposit into a savings account based on the temperature in your city. If it's 50 degrees, for instance, save \$50. The challenge gets harder as it gets warmer, so it's best to start in the winter when it's more manageable.

— **No spend challenge:** It's as straightforward as it sounds: You commit to only spend on essentials over a certain period to save big. Some people even clean

out their pantries to lower their grocery bills. The level of difficulty is subjective for this challenge, but it's likely more sustainable over a short term.

— **Customize your own challenge:** Modify a popular challenge to fit your needs by shortening or extending deadlines or the cadence of saving. For instance, you could stretch the 100 envelope challenge over 100 weeks (about 2 years) instead of days, if that's more achievable. Brown also creates her own challenges. In one such challenge, she seeks discounts at the grocery store to stash savings for future goals. She says she saved a total of \$3,560.58 in 2021 by juggling multiple challenges each month.

LEARN WHAT MOTIVATES YOU

Mastering a savings challenge involves understanding your motivations. Consider whether you're motivated by big or small deposits, randomness or predictability, cash or electronic deposits, or active versus passive saving. If you're unsure, try a few money-saving challenges to learn what works. Passive savings challenges like keep the change can lay a solid foundation for bigger challenges and savings.

"I think passive is a great starting point, and once you get comfortable and consistent with passive saving, you can then add or switch to an active savings model," Waisel says.

Finding the right challenge may require trial and error, but even as you experiment you'll likely save money in the process. □

Trade group settles GMO-labeling case for \$9 million

By **GENE JOHNSON**
Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — A trade group that represents some of the biggest U.S. food companies has agreed to pay \$9 million for violations of Washington campaign finance laws, after the state Supreme Court up-

held a penalty twice that much.

The Consumer Brands Association, which represents companies including PepsiCo and General Mills, said in January it intended to appeal the state ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court.

But on Wednesday, Wash-

ington Attorney General Bob Ferguson, who sued the group in 2013, announced it was dropping its appeal and would instead settle the case for \$9 million, including \$3 million in donations to two charities that fight hunger. □



Washington Attorney General Bob Ferguson talks to reporters, Monday, Aug. 26, 2019, during a news conference in Seattle.

Associated Press

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

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Yesterday's answer

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AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

3-3 CRYPTOQUOTE

MICP PH IMPIBPGVMVMO HB
VQFBIYYVZI PGKT. G PDHBIISOD-
OHVMO YVKIMRI QGMGOIY PH
VMPBVOSI QHYP FIHFKI.

— UKHBIMRI E. DGBBVQGM
Yesterday's Cryptoquote: IN THE PAST, THOSE WHO FOOLISHLY SOUGHT POWER BY RIDING THE BACK OF THE TIGER ENDED UP INSIDE. — JOHN F. KENNEDY



A United Launch Alliance Atlas V rocket, carrying America's newest weather satellite, lifts off from Space Launch Complex 41 at the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, Tuesday, March 1, 2022, in Cape Canaveral, Fla.

Associated Press

Weather satellite rockets to orbit to monitor U.S. West

By MARCIA DUNN

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.

(AP) — America's newest weather satellite blasted off Tuesday to improve wildfire and flood forecasting across the western half of the country.

It's the replacement for a satellite launched exactly four years ago, which ended up with a cooling line blockage that hindered its main camera.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said the new model is redesigned to avoid the problem. It will be designated GOES-18 after reaching an equatorial orbit 22,000 miles (36,000 kilometers) up. The first images should come next year, following months of testing.

This is the third in a nearly \$11.7 billion series of four weather satellites that are among the most advanced ever built; the cost includes 30 years of operation. The first soared in 2016 to track Atlantic hurricanes and other East Coast weather, while the second lifted off March 1, 2018. The fourth is set to launch in

2024.

The NASA-supported GOES satellites "provide the only continuous coverage of weather and hazardous environmental conditions in the Western Hemisphere," said NOAA program director Pam Sullivan. "These observations are even more critical now in a time when the U.S. is experiencing a record number of billion-dollar disasters."

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New Dr. Seuss-inspired books to feature diverse creators

By **MARK PRATT**

Sketches of fantastic creatures by Dr. Seuss that have never before been published will see the light of day in new books being written and illustrated by an inclusive group of up-and-coming authors and artists, the company that owns the intellectual property rights to Dr. Seuss' works announced Wednesday.

The new line of books will include original stories inspired by previously unpublished illustrations selected from the author's archives at the University of California San Diego, Dr. Seuss Enterprises said in a statement on the late writer's birthday. The announcement comes exactly one year after the business founded by the family of Dr. Seuss — whose real name was Theodor Seuss Geisel — announced that it would stop publishing six Dr. Seuss titles because they include racist and insensitive images, a decision that drew both condemnation and praise. In "And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street," an Asian person is portrayed wearing a conical hat, holding chopsticks and eating from a bowl. "If I Ran the Zoo" includes a drawing of two bare-footed African men wearing what appear to be grass skirts with



A mural that features Theodor Seuss Geisel, left, also known by his pen name Dr. Seuss, covers part of a wall near an entrance at The Amazing World of Dr. Seuss Museum, May 4, 2017, in Springfield, Mass.

Associated Press

their hair tied above their heads. The other books affected were "McElligot's Pool," "On Beyond Zebra!," "Scrambled Eggs Super!," and "The Cat's Quizzer."

The new authors and illustrators will represent a diverse cross-section of racial backgrounds to represent as many families as possible, Dr. Seuss Enterprises said. Company officials were not available to comment, a spokesperson said. "We look forward to putting the spotlight on a new generation of talent who we

know will bring their unique voices and style to the page, while also drawing inspiration from the creativity and imagination of Dr. Seuss," Susan Brandt, President and CEO of Dr. Seuss Enterprises, said in a statement. The books, under the banner Seuss Studios and published by Random House Children's Books, will be geared toward readers ages 4 to 8.

"The original Dr. Seuss sketch that serves as the inspiration for each of the new Seuss Studios books will be includ-

ed in the book, along with a note from the creators explaining how they were inspired, and their process," the San Diego-based company said.

The images include a cat-like creature with enormous ears and a series of colorful hummingbirds with pointy noses.

The goal is to continue Geisel's legacy, started in 1957 with the launch of the Beginner Books imprint at Random House, of inspiring young readers and supporting writers and art-

ists starting their publishing careers, the company said. The company seems genuine in its efforts to address inclusiveness, said Pamela Good, president of Beyond Basics, a Michigan-based nonprofit that promotes literacy.

"We believe that literacy is for everyone," she said. "And as you try to find solutions that really are thoughtful and are heartfelt, they really do embrace everyone and allow everybody to be celebrated. And I think that what they're doing right now is a step in the right direction."

Dr. Seuss Enterprises has not yet disclosed the writers and illustrators who will work on the new books because contracts are still being ironed out.

The first of the new books is expected to hit shelves next year, and the goal is to publish at least two new books per year.

Dr. Seuss books such as "Green Eggs and Ham" and "The Cat in the Hat" remain popular more than 30 years after Geisel's death in 1991. He earned an estimated \$35 million in 2021, making him the fifth-highest paid dead celebrity of the year, according to Forbes. Roald Dahl is No. 1, followed by Prince, Michael Jackson and Charles Schulz. □

Broadway theater will be renamed after James Earl Jones



James Earl Jones accepts the special Tony award for Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre at the 71st annual Tony Awards in New York on June 11, 2017.

Associated Press

By **MARK KENNEDY**

AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Shubert Organization's Cort Theatre on Broadway will be renamed after James Earl Jones, fulfilling a promise by the theater giant to honor a Black artist in such a way.

The James Earl Jones Theatre renaming is "in recognition of Mr. Jones' lifetime of immense contributions to Broadway and the entire artistic community," according to a statement by the Shuberts.

The move comes less than a year after a wide Broadway coalition of theater owners, producers, union leaders, creators and casting directors hammered out a series of reforms and

commitments for the theater industry to ensure equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility.

One requirement of the New Deal for Broadway is that the Shubert, Nederlander and Jujamcyn chains have at least one of their theaters named after a Black artist. (Jujamcyn already has the August Wilson Theatre.)

"For me standing in this very building 64 years ago at the start of my Broadway career, it would have been inconceivable that my name would be on the building today," Jones, 91, said in a statement. "Let my journey from then to now be an inspiration for

all aspiring actors."

Jones has appeared in 21 Broadway productions, including two at the Cort Theatre. He is an Emmy-, Grammy-, Oscar- and Tony-winner, including stage awards for best actor for "The Great White Hope" and "Fences," as well as a lifetime achievement award in 2017.

The Cort Theatre — at 138 W. 48th St. — is 110 years old and was built by and named for John Cort, general manager of the Northwestern Theatrical Association, who died in 1929. There are 41 Broadway theaters — four are named for women and now two for Black artists. □

Tiger Woods beats out Mickelson for \$8 million impact bonus

By **DOUG FERGUSON**

AP Golf Writer

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — Tiger Woods still moves the needle in golf even when he barely plays.

The PGA Tour informed players on Wednesday that Woods was the winner of the new \$40 million "Player Impact Program" that rewards those who generate the most positive interest in golf measured by five metrics.

Woods won the \$8 million prize over Phil Mickelson, who claimed on Twitter in December that he was the winner.

The tour had said the program would be measured through the end of the year. Woods captivated golf in December when he returned from a shattered right leg in a February car accident to play the PNC Championship with his son, Charlie. They finished second. Mickelson took to Twitter in December to "thank all the crazies (and real supporters) for helping him win the PIP.

He ended his message with words that didn't age well: "P.S. I'll try and find another hot controversial topic soon??"

Woods responded with one



Tiger Woods speaks during the trophy ceremony on the 18th green after the Genesis Invitational golf tournament at Riviera Country Club, Sunday, Feb. 20, 2022, in the Pacific Palisades area of Los Angeles.

Associated Press

word above Mickelson's tweet — "Whoops."

Mickelson's public image has been badly damaged in recent weeks for revealing in an interview with Alan Shipnuck, who is writing an unauthorized biography on him, that he was willing to support a Saudi-funded rival golf league as leverage — while acknowledging the human rights atrocities in Saudi Arabia — to get

changes he wants on the PGA Tour.

In another interview, he accused the tour of "obnoxious greed."

Mickelson is taking time away from the game and has not played since the Saudi International a month ago.

Mickelson finished second in the Player Impact Program and earned \$6 million. He was followed by

Rory McIlroy, Jordan Spieth, Bryson DeChambeau and Justin Thomas, who each earned \$3.5 million.

The rest of the top 10, who each made \$3 million from the bonus program, were Dustin Johnson, Brooks Koepka, Jon Rahm and Bubba Watson.

The PIP program was among those influenced by the threat of a rival league that Greg Norman is trying

to put together with Saudi Arabian money. Prize money and bonus programs like the FedEx Cup already were increasing based on new media contracts that began this year.

PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan had said in an interview with The Associated Press in January that threats from a rival league allowed the tour to consider "sacred cows, or some areas that people said you can never do that."

The PIP program, along with the "Play 15" that pays every player \$50,000 for entering the minimum 15 tournaments a year, are not based on performance.

The five metrics used for the PIP are internet searches (Google Search); unique news articles that include the player's name (Meltwater Mentions); TV sponsor exposure (Nielsen ratings); awareness (Q-score) and social media engagement (MVP Index).

Woods rated first in Google Search, Meltwater and Q-score. He was No. 8 in the MVP Index and 43rd in the Nielsen rating.

Woods had a Sunday appearance in the CBS booth at Riviera last year for his Genesis Invitational. □

Fans chant 'We want baseball!' but won't get it anytime soon

By **RONALD BLUM**

AP Baseball Writer

JUPITER, Fla. (AP) — As Rob Manfred stood behind a podium in the left-field corner of Roger Dean Stadium and announced that opening day was canceled, a cluster of fans gathered outside the spring training home of the Miami Marlins and St. Louis Cardinals. They had something to say, too. "We want baseball!" the group chanted at the MLB commissioner.

They won't get it anytime soon.

With owners and players unable to agree on a labor contract to replace the collective bargaining agreement that expired Dec. 1, Manfred followed through with his threat and canceled the first two series for each of the 30 ma-

nor league teams. The announcement Tuesday cut each club's schedule from 162 games to likely 156 at most. A total of 91 games were erased.

"We've seen this coming in a sense," free agent reliever Andrew Miller said. "It's unfortunate. But this isn't new to us. This is not shocking."

More than pure numbers are a cause of the contention. Players are seething over their allegations of service-time manipulation and Major League Baseball's increased number of rebuilding clubs, which the union calls tanking.

Issues such as the size and format of the postseason have become divisive.

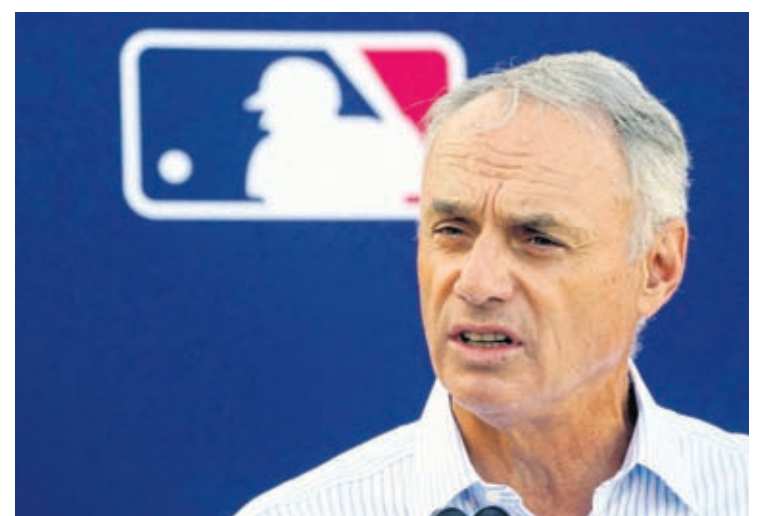
"A core of this negotiation's to increase competition and there's no way we're leaving the table without

something that does that," Miller said. "We're not going to do anything to sacrifice this competition of the season. Anything that points towards mediocrity, that's the antithesis of our game and what we're about as players."

The luxury tax may be the single most difficult issue. MLB proposed raising the tax threshold from \$210 million to \$220 million in each of the next three seasons, \$224 million in 2025 and \$230 million in 2026.

A higher threshold likely would lead to more spending by large-market teams such as the New York Yankees, Boston Red Sox and Los Angeles Dodgers.

"We have a payroll disparity problem," Manfred said, "and to weaken the only mechanism in the agree-



Major League Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred speaks during a news conference after negotiations with the players' association toward a labor deal, Tuesday, March 1, 2022, at Roger Dean Stadium in Jupiter, Fla.

Associated Press

ment that's designed to promote some semblance of competitive balance is just something that I don't think the club group is prepared to do right now."

Players are unhappy over how the tax system worked during the last labor contract, which included surtaxes to discourage high spending. □

Retirement looms, but Krzyzewski's influence built to last

By **AARON BEARD**
AP Basketball Writer

Mike Krzyzewski's unparalleled coaching career is down to a few basketball games, with no more than a month left before the retiring Duke Hall of Famer walks off the sideline for the last time.

His influence on the sport will remain long past that final farewell. The fingerprints of the man known simply as "Coach K" are all over the highest levels of the game as he winds down his nearly five-decade head-coaching career.

Nearly two dozen of his former players currently are on NBA rosters. Another dozen or so are coaching or working for NBA teams. There are others who lead their own Division I college



Duke head coach Mike Krzyzewski kisses the net after cutting it down following Duke's 61-59 win over Butler in the men's NCAA Final Four college basketball championship game Monday, April 5, 2010, in Indianapolis.

Associated Press

programs. And some of the NBA's biggest stars of the past two decades have won Olympic gold medals under his direction.

"He's got a small army of people that are working in

basketball that believe in his values and things that he felt were important," said Arizona State coach Bobby Hurley, the point guard on Krzyzewski's first two NCAA championship

teams in 1991 and 1992. "That's regardless of whether you coached with him or if you were a player, because they'll have such incredible experiences and memories of things that he did that you still use in your own situations.

"His legacy is going to continue to grow through others that he's had an impact on in their lives, and I'm definitely one of those people." The 75-year-old Krzyzewski coaches his final home game at Cameron Indoor Stadium on Saturday, fittingly against rival North Carolina. At most, he has 10 games left in a career that began with five seasons at Army followed by 42 at Duke, assuming the Blue Devils reach both next week's Atlantic Coast Con-

ference Tournament final in New York and the NCAA championship game in New Orleans on April 4.

Regardless of when or how the end comes, Krzyzewski's place is unquestioned among the greatest coaches in the history of American sports.

He has a 1,196 career victories, more than any coach in men's or women's college history. His five NCAA titles rank second to late UCLA great John Wooden on the men's side, while his resume includes a record-tying 12 Final Fours and a record 127 weeks with teams ranked at No. 1 in The Associated Press men's college basketball poll.

"He's the best that's ever done that in the modern basketball world," Syracuse coach Jim Boeheim said. "John Wooden won 10 championships, you can never say anything but that. But it's a different world today. There have been a lot of great coaches – there's nobody close to what Mike has done.

"He has given everything to the game and helped make the game what it is today without any question."

The numbers back up Boeheim's conviction.

Krzyzewski had 21 players as of February on NBA rosters — including current or former All-Stars Jayson Tatum, Kyrie Irving, Zion Williamson and Brandon Ingram — and an ACC-record 27 players last season.

Go back further, and NBA teams have drafted 68 of Krzyzewski's Blue Devils, with 42 as first-round picks and three — Elton Brand in 1999, Irving in 2011 and Williamson in 2019 — going No. 1 overall.

Duke notes that Krzyzewski has coached 113 NBA players between the school and USA Basketball, where Krzyzewski partnered with former managing director Jerry Colangelo to restructure the men's national team program. The result: he managed egos and meshed star talent like LeBron James and the late Kobe Bryant to thrice produce Olympic gold. □

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